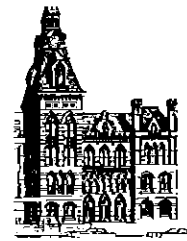




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**Testimony of the City of New Haven
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee**

In Support of
**S.B. No. 1063 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIFORM COLLATERAL
CONSEQUENCES OF CONVICTION ACT.**

Submitted by
Althea Marshall Brooks, Community Services Administrator, City of New Haven
March 11, 2013

Good morning, Senator Coleman, Rep. Fox, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of SB 1062, An Act Concerning the Uniform collateral Consequences of Conviction Act.

As Community Services Administrator for the City of New Haven, I oversee the New Haven Prison Reentry Initiative which was launched in 2008 to work with community partners, state agencies and other reentry stakeholders to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated residents into the New Haven community. The Reentry Initiative provides information and advocacy to hundreds of individuals with criminal records each year who seek assistance overcoming the barriers they face in obtaining lawful employment, affordable housing, and other measures of productive citizenship. One of the driving forces behind the decriminalization of small amounts of marijuana in 2011 was the multitude of collateral consequences associated with the offense. The American Bar Association estimate that 633 such consequences exist for individuals convicted of a felony in Connecticut¹. These consequences are often unknown to the public, including those individuals who may be making a plea deal, and admitting guilt to an offense for a lesser sentence.

In response to the growing concern of reentrants and providers regarding the burden collateral consequences impose on convicted persons and their reintegration, on April 2, 2011, the City of New Haven passed a local Collateral Consequence Ordinance. The Ordinance requires the Reentry initiative to catalog, online, all local legislation that allows for the consideration of criminal convictions in decisions regarding jobs, contracts and licenses and clarifies the city's licensing process by requiring the factors used in determining the relevance of a criminal record to include the nature of the conviction, relationship to the benefit being sought, the length of time since the conviction, the gravity of the offence, the age at the time of the offense and information relating to rehabilitation or good conduct.

SB 1063 requires the Judicial Branch to compile and make available a list of all collateral consequences in state laws and regulations. This law will help draw attention to the additional barriers individuals with a criminal conviction must overcome and coupled with the provisions in HB 6582 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission with Respect to Certificates of Rehabilitation will help individuals to overcome many of these barriers to successful reintegration.

¹ <http://isrweb.isr.temple.edu/projects/accproject/pages/GetStateRecords.cfm?State=CT>